

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 GABORO 01369 210957Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 SCS-03 SCA-01

/088 W

-----024357 211003Z /10

R 210730Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0092

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DARESSALAAM

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GABORONE 1369

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

MASERU FOR PEACE CORPS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN, PINS, PFOR, BC, RH

SUBJECT: HOLDUP OF U.S. PEACE CORPS TOURISTS

REF: A. GABORONE 1340; B. GABORONE 1349; C. GABORONE 1355

1. THREE PEACE CORPS TEACHERS WHO WERE ROBBED ON BOTZAM ROAD

JUNE 13 (REFS A AND B) CALLED AT EMBASSY GABORONE MORNING

JUNE 20 ON RETURN TO LESOTHO AND WERE INTERVIEWED BY EMBOFF.

ALTHOUGH THEY COULD NOT IDENTIFY ORGANIZATION TO WHICH HOLDUP

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 GABORO 01369 210957Z

MEN BELONGED AND SEEMED SURPRISED ON LEARNING THAT GOB HAD
LABELED THEM AS MEMBERS OF RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCE IN A.

2. WHEN PUTTING ELEMENTS OF THEIR STORY TOGETHER, IT

IS INDEED DIFFICULT TO MAKE POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION OF

CULPRITS. ALTHOUGH ONE OF THE SOLDIERS IDENTIFIED HIS

UNIT AS BELONGING TO THE "BOTSWANA ARMY" AND GROUP WAS

ARMED WITH SUBMACHINE GUNS SIMILAR TO THOSE WHICH AMERICANS SAW CARRIED BY BOTSWANA POLICE IN KASANE (CURVED MAGAZINE FITTING INTO UNDERSIDE OF WEAPON), THE SOLDIERS DID NOT SPEAK SETSWANA BUT, IN ADDITION TO ENGLISH, SOME LANGUAGE OF POSSIBLY RHODESIAN ORIGIN. TOO, THEIR ARMY FATIGUE UNIFORMS SEEMED INCOMPLETE AND NOT STANDARDIZED. LEADER, FOR EXAMPLE, WORE A BRIGHT BLUE SHIRT. TYPE OF UNUSUAL FATIGUE SHIRT WORN BY OTHER MEMBER OF THE GROUP WAS SEEN LATER BY AMERICANS ON BACK OF ALLEGED RHODESIAN FREEDOM FIGHTER WHO HAD TURNED HIMSELF INTO THE BOTSWANA POLICE. THE SOLDIERS WERE WELL DISCIPLINED AND GAVE ASSURANCES THEY WOULD HARM NO ONE. TOO, THEY SEEMED LIKE YOUNG VILLAGE BOYS, FASCINATED WITH THE NOVELTY OF THE LOOT THEY TOOK. AMERICANS SAID KASANE OFFICIALS DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH HARMFUL EFFECTS WHICH INCIDENT WOULD HAVE ON TOURISM AND AT FIRST ASKED THEM TO KEEP QUIET ABOUT IT.

3. COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN ROBBERS AND BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE (BDF) VERY UNLIKELY GIVEN SATISFACTORY STATE OF BDF DISCIPLINE. CULTURITS WERE LIKELY EITHER MEMBERS OF THE RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES, AS THE PRESS STATEMENT CLAIMED (REF A), OR A BAND OF RHODESIAN NATIONALIST FREEDOM FIGHTERS. CONCERN AMONG GOB OFFICIALS OVER ADVERSE IMPACT ON TOURISM PROBABLY CONTRIBUTED TO THREE-DAY DELAY IN INFORMING EMBASSY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 GABORO 01369 210957Z

OF INCIDENT AND IN RELEASING PRESS STATEMENT. TAKEN TOGETHER WITH SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN PAST (TO INCLUDE RECENT FRANCISTOWN NIGHT CLUB EXPLOSION) AND WITH PROBABLE ATTEMPTED HOLDUP BY REPUTEDLY WHITE RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES ON FOLLOWING DAY (SEE REF C), THIS INCIDENT INVOLVING AMERICANS ILLUSTRATES FACT THAT NORTHERN BOTSWANA IN DANGER OF BECOMING PLAYGROUND FOR ROAMING ARMED BANDS OF ALL PERSUASIONS. IMPORTANCE AND INEVITABILITY OF FOUNDING OF BDF IN MARCH SHOULD BE SEEN IN THIS CONTEXT. EMBASSY POUCHING FOR AF/S COPIES OF STATEMENTS MADE TO POLICE BY THE AMERICANS. ALBERTI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: THEFTS, TOURISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GABORO01369
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770220-1242
Format: TEL
From: GABORONE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770636/aaaabfqx.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c0566479-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 GABORONE 1340, 77 GABORONE 1349, 77 GABORONE 1355
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2086091
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HOLDUP OF U.S. PEACE CORPS TOURISTS
TAGS: CGEN, PINS, PFOR, BC, RH, PC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c0566479-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009